

Message Text

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ACTION ARA-14

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TO SECSTATE WASHDC 2243
INFO AMEMBASSY BANGKOK
AMEMBASSY JAKARTA

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FOR DS/POP/LA

AIDAC

E.O. 11652: N/A
TAGS: SPOP, MX
SUBJECT: POPULATION: TRIP REPORT VISIT MEXICAN OFFICIALS
TO THAILAND AND INDONESIA.

1. AT THE SUGGESTION OF DS/POP KEY TOP-LEVEL OFFICIALS OF
THE MEXICAN NATIONAL FAMILY PLANNING PROGRAM AND THE
POPOFF VISITED FAMILY PLANNING PROGRAMS OF INDONESIA AND
THAILAND. MEXICAN OFFICIALS WERE:

CHIEF OF DELEGATION: ING. RAUL RODRIGUEZ - DIRECTOR OF
PLANNING FOR NATIONAL FAMILY PLANNING COORDINATION (CPF);

PROF. HUMBERTO MEDINA- THEN DIRECTOR OF RURAL PROGRAMS CPF

DR. FRANCISCO ALARCON - DIRECTOR OF STATE PROGRAM
COORDINATION OF CPF;

LIC. MARICARMEN ELU DE LENERO- SUB-DIRECTOR OF MATERNAL
CHILD HEALTH AND FAMILY PLANNING DIRECTORATE OF THE
MINISTRY OF HEALTH;
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ING. CARLOS NUNO - DIRECTOR OF COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT OF
THE MINISTRY OF AGRARIAN REFORM;

LIC. JESUS LLANOS MONTIEL - DIRECTOR OF COMMUNITY AND
SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT OF INTEGRAL FAMILY DEVELOPMENT (DIF).

2. PURPOSE OF TRIP: TO SEE SOME OF WORLD'S MOST SUCCESSFUL FP PROGRAMS IN ORDER TO FINE-TUNE MEXICAN NATIONAL FAMILY PLANNING PROGRAM; TO SEE INNOVATIVE USES OF POLITICAL INFRASTRUCTURE; TO SEE INNOVATIVE USES OF PARAMEDICS FOR VSC; TO SEE RESULTS OF TOTAL AVAILABILITY AND EASY ACCESS TO CONTRACEPTIVES AND CONTRACEPTIVE INFORMATION IN VILLAGE DELIVERY SITUATIONS; TO SEE IMPACT OF VILLAGE REGISTRATION OF WIFA AND PROGRAMMED FP SERVICE DELIVERY AROUND REGISTRATION FORMAT.

3. CHARACTERISTICS OF THE MEXICAN GROUP: FOUR BELONG TO TECHNICALLY COMPETENT, YOUNG, INNOVATIVE, HIGHLY MOTIVATED INDIVIDUALS RESPONSIBLE FOR PUSHING PROGRAMS IN RURAL AREAS; TWO BELONG TO "OLD SCHOOL", TRADITIONALLY ORIENTED TOWARD DOCTOR DELIVERY OF SERVICES IN CLINIC SITUATION.

4. RESULTS OF TRIP:

A. CONFIRMATION THAT WHILE FP MAY BE AN IMPORTANT HEALTH INTERVENTION WITH IMPROVED HEALTH RESULTS, IT IS OF IMPORTANT SHORT AND LONG RANGE ECONOMIC IMPORTANCE. CONFIRMATION THAT TO ACHIEVE STATED DEMOGRAPHIC GOALS, THE GOM FP PROGRAM IS ON RIGHT TRACK BY BEING MORE THAN HEALTH AND HEALTH INFRASTRUCTURE ORIENTED.

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IN INDONESIA, WHERE THERE IS LITTLE HEALTH INFRASTRUCTURE, THERE IS EVIDENCE THAT FOR FP TO BE SUCCESSFUL, THERE IS NO NEED FOR INTEGRATION WITH A HEALTH SYSTEM OR EVEN TO BE VIEWED AS A HEALTH-RELATED PROGRAM. INDONESIA IS AN EXAMPLE OF A WAY OF DELIVERING FP SERVICES WITHOUT THE EXISTENCE OF A LARGE HEALTH INFRASTRUCTURE AND WITHOUT EVIDENCE OF EXISTENCE AS A PRECONDITION FOR SERVICE ACCEPTANCE OF SUBSTANTIAL SOCIAL AND ECONOMIC CHANGE FACTORS. FP APPEARS TO BE THE LEADING EDGE OF DEVELOPING THE PROVISION OF OTHER GOVERNMENT SERVICES FOR THE PEOPLE.

B. CONFIRMATION THAT MEXICAN NATIONAL FP PLAN, DESIGNED ALONG NATIONAL LINES, IN RELATIVE ISOLATION FROM OTHER SUCCESSFUL FP PROGRAMS, IS PHILOSOPHICALLY SOUND AND ON TARGET.

C. CONFIRMATION THAT TOTAL AVAILABILITY AND EASY ACCESS BY VILLAGERS AND RURAL PEOPLE TO CONTRACEPTIVES AND CONTRACEPTIVE INFORMATION IS KEY FACTOR TO HIGHER

ACCEPTOR LEVELS AND HIGHER CONTINUATION RATES.

D. CONFIRMATION THAT CBD EFFORTS MUST FOLLOW BEHAVIOUR PATTERNS OF VILLAGES AND NOT SUPERIMPOSE OUTSIDE DESIGN ON VILLAGE. AS STATED IN INDONESIA BY BKKBN, "THE VILLAGE IS WHERE THE PROGRAM BEGINS, NOT WHERE THE PROGRAM ENDS".

E. EXPERIENCE THAT REGISTRATION OF ALL WIFA IN A COMMUNITY WITH FOLLOW-UP CONTROL MECHANISM IS NECESSARY TO INSURE

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TASK-ORIENTED DIRECTION TO FP COMMUNITY AGENTS AND TO INSURE GREATER NUMBER OF ACCEPTORS AND HIGHER CONTINUATION RATES.

F. EXPERIENCE OF THE IMPACT OF THE MOBILIZATION OF ALL LEVELS OF POLITICAL INFRASTRUCTURE WITH APPROPRIATE INCENTIVE-DISINCENTIVE SYSTEMS FOR VILLAGES AND POLITICIANS. MEXICAN GROUP NOW STUDYING WAYS OF INCORPORATING ADDITIONAL LEVELS OF POLITICAL INFRASTRUCTURE INTO FP PROGRAM SUPPORT WITHOUT AT SAME TIME JEOPARDIZING FP PROGRAMS BY HAVING THEM DEPENDENT ON OR CLEARLY IDENTIFIED WITH POLITICAL ACTION.

G. EXPERIENCE THAT WHILE THE VILLAGE ORGANIZATION IN INDONESIA AND MEXICO ARE NOT COMPARABLE MEXICANS CAN USE IDEAS OF ACCEPTORS CLUBS TO INCREASE PEER PRESSURE AND MAINTAIN HIGH CONFIDENCE/SATISFACTION LEVEL IN PROGRAM USE.

H. CONFIRMATION THAT INDONESIA HAS USED FP AS THRUST FOR NATIONAL DEVELOPMENT AND HAS PROVIDED ORGANIZATIONAL

AND INFRASTRUCTURAL EMPHASIS. MEXICAN BELIEVE SAME RESULTS CAN BE ACHIEVED WITHOUT AS MUCH INFRASTRUCTURE EXPENDITURE.

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I. EXPERIENCE THAT PEOPLE ARE GENERALLY MORE READY FOR INNOVATIVE PROGRAMS THAN GOVERNMENTS THINK THEY ARE. DESPITE GOVERNMENT CAUTIONS ABOUT STERILIZATION PROGRAMS, WHERE QUALITY OF SERVICES HAVE BEEN OFFERED AND ARE EASILY ACCESSABLE, DEMAND IS GREAT.

J. EXPERIENCE THAT BECAUSE GOVERNMENTS TEND TO BE HESITANT TO PUSH PROGRAMS THEY BELIEVE MIGHT BE SENSITIVE, A STRONG PRIVATE FP EFFORT IS AN ABSOLUTE NECESSITY TO CREATE A PUSH-PULL FORWARD PROGRESSION INTO NEW AREAS OF FP SERVICES. MEXICAN GROUP DECIDED THAT EFFORTS MUST BE MADE BY THE GOM TO ENCOURAGE PRIVATE ORGANIZATIONS TO TAKE A MORE AGGRESSIVE ROLE IN THE MEXICAN FP EFFORTS, SO THAT THESE IN TURN CAN PULL OFFICIAL PROGRAMS EVEN FURTHER.

K. EXPERIENCE THAT BELIEF SYSTEMS MUST BE CONSTANTLY CHALLENGED, E.G. VASECTOMY PROGRAM USING PARAMEDICS IN THAILAND DISPROVED BELIEF THAT ONLY DOCTORS COULD CARRY OUT SUCCESSFUL VASECTOMY PROGRAM WITHOUT COMPLICATIONS AND THAT MACHO CULTURES WOULD NOT ACCEPT MALE STERILIZATION. MEXICAN GROUP DECIDED THAT MANY SUPERSTITIONS AND BELIEFS IN MEXICO NEEDED TO BE CHALLENGED: ROLE OF CHURCH, ROLE OF MACHISMO, ACCEPTABILITY OR NON-ACCEPTABILITY OF PROGRAMS BY RURAL POPULATION.

L. EXPERIENCE THAT PROGRAMS AIMED AT CHILDREN TO CREATE ATTITUDE OF SMALL FAMILY NORM, IDEAL AGE OF MARRIAGE AND AS WAY OF REACHING PARENTS ARE EFFECTIVE TOOLS THAT CONTRIBUTE TO FP EFFORTS. MEXICAN GROUP AGREED TO NEED FOR SUCH PROGRAMS IN MEXICO AND WILL MOVE TOWARD DEVELOPING THEM.

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M. EXPERIENCE THAT FAMILY PLANNING MUST BE DESENSITIZED AND THAT CONTRACEPTIVES MUST BECOME A DAILY HOUSEHOLD ITEM FREE OF PRESENT TABOOS. AS MECHAI STATED IN THAILAND, "IF A SOLDIER IS AFRAID OF THE GUN HE CANNOT WIN THE WAR". NOT ONLY MUST FP AND CONTRACEPTIVES BE

DESENSITIZED AMONG THE PEOPLE, BUT THE NATIONAL ADMINISTRATORS MUST ALSO ACCEPT THAT DESENSITIZATION OF PROGRAMS AND ATTITUDES MUST REFLECT THE NATURALNESS OF FP.

N. EXPERIENCE THAT THERE ARE WAYS TO CONVERT RELIGIOUS OPPOSITION INTO SUPPORT. EXAMPLE OF STUDY OF TEACHINGS OF BUDDHA WHICH COULD BE CONSTRUED AS PRO-FP AS WAY OF GAINING SUPPORT OF BUDDHIST MONKS LED MEXICAN GROUP TO CONCLUSION SIMILAR ACTION COULD BE DONE IN MEXICO TO WIN OVER MANY NEGATIVE PRIESTS.

5. COLLATERAL RESULTS OF THE TRIP:

A. VARIOUS MEMBERS OF MEXICAN GROUP GOT TO KNOW ONE ANOTHER AND THEIR POINT OF VIEW MUCH BETTER. THEY DISCOVERED THEY AGREED ON PHILOSOPHY AND APPROACH AND THE CHANCE FOR THEM TO HAVE A SHARED EXPERIENCE AND RELATE IT TO THE SITUATION BACK HOME CREATED A CLOSE WORKING BOND BETWEEN A GROUP THAT BY FORCE OF NEED MUST WORK CLOSELY TOGETHER TO IMPLEMENT A CAREFUL NATIONAL RURAL FP PROGRAM. MOVEMENT AWAY FROM TRADITIONAL BELIEFS WAS DEMONSTRATED BY THE TOW "OLD SCHOOLERS" IN THE GROUP. THIS SERVES AS EVIDENCE THAT ADVOCACY CAN BE FORMED AMONG OPPONENTS OF AN ACTIVITY BY INCLUDING THEM IN SHARED EXPERIENCES THAT PERMIT NEW BEHAVIOUR TO SURFACE.

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C. THE MEXICAN GROUP WAS SURPRISED AND STARTLED BY THE APPARENT RELATIVE HIGH QUALITY OF LIFE AND HOUSING CONDITIONS IN RURAL JAVA AND THAILAND AS COMPARED TO MEXICO. THEY HAD BELIEVED THAT BECAUSE OF SUBSTANTIALLY

LOWER PER CAPITA INCOMES, RURAL CONDITIONS IN INDONESIA AND THAILAND WOULD HAVE BEEN WORSE NOT BETTER-THAN THOSE OF MEXICO. IT LED MEXICANS TO REALIZE HOW FAR BEHIND THEY ARE IN THE DEVELOPMENT PROCESS AND HOW DEPRIVED THEIR RURAL POPULATIONS ARE AND THE CONSEQUENT NEED FOR VIGOROUS ACTION TO IMPROVE CONDITIONS, WITH FP AS ONE OF THE LEADING ELEMENTS.

6. LOGISTICS:

ARRANGEMENTS WERE MADE THROUGH DS/POP AND USAIDS, AND WERE SUPERBLY ORCHESTRATED BY BOTH USAIDS AND THE HOST GOVERNMENTS. THE GROUP WAS IMPRESSED BY THE EASY, OPEN, AND FRANK POSITION OF THE LOCAL OFFICIALS AND DELIGHTED WITH THE WARM FRIENDSHIP AND SUPPORT AS WELL AS HOSPITALITY OF THE USAID POPOFFICERS. (AS MEXICO FACES INCREASING NUMBERS OF VISITORS, IT WILL KNOW HOW TO ORGANIZE USEFUL VISITS AND EXPERIENCES AS A RESULT OF HAVING PARTICIPATED IN THE CLOCK-WORK INTENSIVE VISITS IN BOTH INDONESIA AND THAILAND.) POPOFFICER PASSES ON THE APPRECIATION AND GRATITUDE OF THE MEXICAN GROUP

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AND HIS OWN FOR THE EXCELLENT SUPPORT OF USAID INDONESIA AND THAILAND AS WELL AS THE RTG AND GOI.

7. CONCLUSION:

THE MEXICAN GROUP FOUND THE VISIT OF IMMEASURABLE VALUE FOR THE MEXICAN PROGRAM AND THE POPOFF WOULD ENCOURAGE OTHER MISSIONS TO MAKE ARRANGEMENTS FOR THIS TYPE OF VISIT FOR KEY FP POLICY MAKERS AND PROGRAM DESIGNERS/IMPLEMENTERS IN THEIR COUNTRIES AS A WAY OF MOVING THE FP PROGRAM FORWARD MORE RAPIDLY. MCANINCH

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